

## BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES, AND HOUSING AGENCY

1010 Hurley Way, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
(916) 263-6000  
Fax (916) 263-6042

[www.chrb.ca.gov](http://www.chrb.ca.gov)

## CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD



Los Alamitos Race Course  
4961 E. Katella Avenue  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Contact: Mike Marten  
(714) 240-1870  
[MikeM@chrb.ca.gov](mailto:MikeM@chrb.ca.gov)

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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## SUMMARY OF CHRB ACTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS 10-20-21

The California Horse Racing Board conducted a meeting by teleconference on Wednesday, October 20. The public participated by dialing into the teleconference and/or listening through the audio webcast link on the CHRB website. Chairman Gregory Ferraro chaired the meeting, joined by Vice Chair Oscar Gonzales and Commissioners Dennis Alfieri, Damascus Castellanos, Brenda Washington Davis, Wendy Mitchell, and Alex Solis.

First, the CHRB apologizes for the interruptions in the audio through the webcast link. These were caused by technical difficulties that have since been corrected. The full audio of this entire Board meeting is available on the CHRB Website ([www.chrb.ca.gov](http://www.chrb.ca.gov)) under the Webcast link. In brief:

- The Medication, Safety, and Welfare Committee met Tuesday to discuss the advisability of penalizing trainers for injuries and fatalities for horses in their care. Alan Balch, executive director of the California Thoroughbred Trainers, gave a lengthy report based on extensive conversations he and CTT board members had with trainers across the state. Chairman Ferraro, who also chairs the committee, provided the following summary of that meeting on Wednesday:

“As you know, this Board has been actively pursuing reducing the injury rate in California for the last two years. We’ve done quite well, but the Committee felt that we had to do better. Now one of the issues that came out in this search for trying to decrease injuries (was the) possibility of penalizing trainers who had multiple injuries – more than the norm. It was quite a controversial proposal amongst trainers. I was pleased to see that they came forward during the meeting (with) a very progressive set of proposals that really made a lot of sense and ended up being quite productive. Their proposal includes about 10 different elements to it to improve our safety but the main ingredient, which everyone seems to be in favor of, was to develop an accident prevention task force, which would unite all the different elements of racing participants around the table and work towards developing regulations and procedures to further decrease our injury rate. This will include involvement of all elements of racing: trainers, owners, racetrack management,

CHRB, in order to prevent further injuries. The discussion was quite productive. There were several other proposals. Included in that perhaps developing best practices for training, develop a video tape for viewing those procedures...they wanted us to improve continuing education and mandate participation. They are looking for consistent and uniform regulations for each facility, so that every track operated the same way. There were several other proposals, but the main idea was rather than going forward with penalizing or praising one particular group involved in racing, that the best way to find good, consistent, usable rules and regulations would be to try to bring all the elements together and have them submit recommendations to the Board that could be adopted to improve the health and safety of horses....Dr. (Jeff) Blea (equine medical director) and I will be getting together with Mr. Balch at Del Mar to try to get this thing instituted and up and running.”

Commissioner Mitchell praised the trainers for being so cooperative.

- The Board approved the license application for the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club to operate a race meet with racing set to run from November 3 through November 28. This meet will feature the Breeders’ Cup championship races on Friday, November 5, and Saturday, November 6. Del Mar Chief Executive Officer Joe Harper pointed out that the Breeders Cup programs will offer \$31 million in purses to horsemen, while providing a \$100-million stimulus to the local economy. Josh Rubinstein, president of Del Mar, reassured that “Del Mar will continue working closely with county and state health officials to ensure a safe environment for all attendees.”
- In conjunction with the race meet approval, the Board approved an agreement between Del Mar and the Thoroughbred Owners of California authorizing the racing secretary to establish conditions on races limiting the administrations of certain medications and certain procedures. While such agreements have become routine for race meets, Executive Director Scott Chaney advised that this particular agreement is “a little bit non-standard. It has one other item that needs to be flagged for the Board -- an agreement between the TOC and Del Mar regarding (all) races for the two days of the Breeders’ Cup, and that is any positive test finding would also be a basis for ineligibility. Breeders’ Cup, TOC, and Del Mar are all on board with it, as well as staff here at the CHRB.” Chairman Ferraro then said, “So any positive test, including a 4 (c) , would be grounds for disqualification. Is that correct?” Chaney responded, “That’s right. It would create ineligibility for the race and give the stewards the ability to disqualify based on that ineligibility.”
- In his report to the Board, Dr. Blea elaborated on some of the safeguards that will be in place for the Breeders Cup: “In addition to the many private practitioners on the backside, approximately 10 other veterinarians from multi-jurisdictions, as well as CHRB regulatory veterinarians, will be examining horses starting on October 25. There will be a USDA veterinarian in the quarantine barn as well as two other

Breeders' Cup quarantine barn veterinarians. Enhanced examinations and testing have been applied to this year's Breeders' Cup championships. For example, there will be a list of required exams performed by practicing veterinarians, with a pre-entry exam that's required by private veterinarians within three days prior to entry...Furthermore, trot-up exams will be a new item this year. There will be minimum of two trot-up exams with the rider up. Breeders' Cup and CHRB regulatory panels will be on the track watching these exams. The plan will be to have a CHRB veterinarian assigned to each horse (beginning October 25) to get to know that horse and observe any changes cause concern or that might be an at-risk factor. CHRB veterinarians and Breeders' Cup veterinarians have the ability to require advance diagnostics at any point in time prior to race start to address any concerns that they identify during the exams. Every Breeders' Cup horse will have blood taken, and those samples will be sent to the (Kenneth L.) Maddy Laboratory for out-of-competition testing."

Dr. Blea also noted that a webinar is located on the Breeders' Cup website explaining rule changes and the rules in California.

- The Board authorized the Los Alamitos Racing Association to distribute \$7,000 to four beneficiaries. Although no race day charity proceeds were generated in 2020 due to the pandemic that eliminated on-track handle, LARA nonetheless has donated \$7,000 for the cause.
- The Board authorized the Los Alamitos Quarter Horse Racing Association to distribute \$4,181 in race day charity proceeds to four beneficiaries.
- Public comments made during the meeting can be accessed through the meeting audio archive on the CHRB website.

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